

DAILY PRESS.
PORTLAND.
Friday Morning, May 31, 1867.
Union State Convention.

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Union State Committee

facts from Sumner's Speech on Russian

This very long and elaborate speech is full of historical facts in relation to the discovery of this far-off territory and the claims to it which different nationalities have set up at various periods. That Russia had a good title to the premises there can be no doubt. This title dates back as far as at least as 1741. The coast of British Columbia, next below, was discovered by Vancouver in 1790, and that of Oregon, further down, by Gray, who sailed from Boston in 1790, and entered the Columbia River in 1792.

river the following year; so that the title of Russia is the earliest on the Northwest coast. The people on the Pacific coast were the first to move in this enterprise, and for the very good reason that they knew more about the value of this territory than those who live on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, and for a still stronger reason because they were aware that they would be the first to reap any advantage from it.

the extent of being almost tedious. But as the question was new and our information in relation to the geography of that country was very limited, he was no doubt justified in being thus particular in his researches and in giving their results to the people of the United States whose money is to be taken for the purchase. The present population of that country he divides into four races, the Esquimaux, the Aleutians, the Kenians and the Koloschies. The Esquimaux number about seven

cent thousand, and stretch along the indented coast from its eastern limit in the Frozen Ocean to the mouth of the Copper river, 60 degrees north latitude, excluding the peninsula of Alaska occupied by the Aleutians, and the peninsula of Kenai, occupied by the Kenaian, the more powerful tribes of Indians, following the course of the great rivers northward and westward, have crowded the Esquimaux from the interior to the coast. Their various dialects are traced to a common root and betray distinct traces of the Esquimaux of Greenland.

The best known of the Russian Esquimaux is a small tribe now remaining on the island of Kodiak, which is quite a center of trade. By intermixture they already approach the Indians on the coast, losing the Asiatic type.—But their speech remains as a distinctive sign of their race. The men are tall, copper-colored, with flat faces and “teeth of dazzling whiteness.” The women pierce their nostrils with ornaments. The food of this people is principally from the sea. The flesh and oil of

Wine made from the strawberry and myrtle and producing the effect of opium, has yielded to brandy. Their canoes are very beautiful in finish and form. They are made of seal-skins stretched over a framework.

The Aleutians number about three thousand. Their home is the archipelago of volcanic islands. They are fishermen and hunters, but they seem to excel as artificers. Their manufactures are by no means inferior to those of their neighbors. The Kenians number

Twenty-five thousand, more numerous than any other family in Russian America, and belonging to a wide-spread and teeming Indian race which occupies all the northern interior of the continent. The last of the four races are the Koloschians, numbering about four thousand, occupy the coast and islands from the mouth of the Copper river to the southern bound of Russian America. In addition to the above population, there are some two or three thousand Russians and others,

Mr. Sumner had much to say upon the climate of the country. And this is a subject upon various opinions have been formed—some of them wild and erroneous. It has been generally supposed that it is a cold, frozen region, far up in the North and quite beyond where there is anything like vegetation. But such is

in the Pacific coast than on the Atlantic in the same latitude; and it is even warmer than the Asiatic coast; for vessels on the latter coast will be covered with ice, and when they cross over to the Pacific coast they will "thaw out," and that in the same latitude.

There is a thermal current in the Pacific ocean—sometimes called the "Japanese current," which takes its rise somewhere near the equator, and, after washing the ancient empire of Japan, passes northward, until, coming to

branches, one moving onward to Behring Straits and the other bends eastward along the Aleutian Islands and thence southward along the coast of Sitka, Oregon and California. This "Japanese current" produces the same effects upon the atmosphere in the regions of the Pacific as the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic. In fact it is a much warmer current and a greater "heater" than the Gulf Stream. There is another climatic incident which is now easily explained. Early navigators record the prevail-

It is found that the winters of Sifka are relatively warm, not differing much from those of Washington, and several degrees warmer than

that of many European capitals. According to observations at Sitka in 1831, it froze for only two days in December and seven days in January. In February, the longest frost lasted for five days. In March it did not freeze at all during the day, and rarely in the night. At Sitka the mean annual fall of rain is eighty-nine inches. In England it is forty inches, although in the mountain districts of Cumberland and Westmoreland the fall amounts to ninety inches and some years much more. In

The vegetable products are trees, grass, flowers and some roots which are excellent for food. Pine and spruce trees grow large and some of our Maine boys will have the handling of them one of these days. There are trees of various kinds, and some of the forests are grand. Berries are also abundant, and plants

food. There is an abundance of ginseng and some snake-root. The former article the Chinese are very fond of and use great quantities of it as a panacea. Wheat and orchard fruits probably cannot be raised there. The northern limit of wheat is several degrees below the northern limit of these possessions. Rye will flourish farther north and so do oats. Barley, it is probable, may be cultivated successfully very far to the north. It has ripened at Kodiak about 57 deg. north. Garden vegetables have

Fort Yankon, on the parallel of 67 deg. potatoes, peas, turnips and even barley have been grown. In the rarity of trees on the islands and mainland of the Pacific we must look for the supply of this deficiency to our new purchase. The grass at Kodiak is well suited to cattle and it is reasonable to suppose that sheep would thrive here.

The furs of this region may next claim our attention. The commerce in furs on both sides of the continent north of the United

—It was of Sir Archibald Alison, whose death is just announced by telegraph, that Disraeli—before he became a Tory himself—wittily said that he wrote history to prove that "Providence was on the side of the Tories."

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